The Blacklist and Its Spread to Newspaper Business, Pages 2 and 3

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Krushchev, Too, Claims Russia Has More Freedom of Speech Than "Bourgeois Democracy"

Still Speaking Stalin's Language

The easiest way for an American to visualize the ruling group in Russia today is to picture George Meany, David Dubinsky, and Carmine de Sapio governing a country where there was State ownership of all the means of production and communication, with no opposition allowed. The men at the top in Moscow are much like the trade union bureaucrats and machine politicians we know so well: shrewd and resourceful but of limited mentality, not without devotion to the institutions they serve but easily identifying loyalty to themselves with loyalty to the system. Like our trade union leaders, they are accustomed cynically to manipulate the election machinery on which their jobs supposedly depend. Once they get into office, they expect to stay on until they die; they live among flunkies and their first concern is with power, and with the intrigue and fear that go to maintain it.

With this picture in mind, one is less likely to be surprised by the low intellectual level and indeed the turgidity of the reply broadcast from Moscow by their Central Committee to criticisms from abroad. This is about what one would expect in a crisis from an A.F. of L. Council: a stubborn repetition of cliches by bureaucrats so accustomed to be obeyed that they have long lost or failed to develop any capacity to persuade or inspire. The thoughtful Soviet citizen—and there are many, despite the stupefying atmosphere—will read the statement with glee, nausea and hope: glee, that the Krushchev crowd has been put on the defensive; nausea, at having to read for the umteenth time this same imbecile litany about "the Beria gang" and the "Trotzkyites, right wing opportunists and bourgeois nationalists"; and hope, that maybe this crowd is so clumsy it will lose power. The intelligent Russian will watch first for the reaction from abroad, particularly in Italy where Togliatti must compete with the Left Socialist Nenni. For this statement is a challenge which says that the Krushchev regime has no intention of making fundamental reforms in the direction of greater freedom of expression and greater security against the State apparatus.

Marxist Supernaturalism?

Here it is in black and white, from the Central Committee, that "collective leadership" from which, miraculously, "correct" decisions infallibly flow. The heart of the statement is its warning that it would be "a serious mistake to deduce from the past existence of the cult of personality some kind of changes in the social order in the U.S.S.R. or to look for the source of this cult in the nature of the Soviet social order. Both alternatives are absolutely wrong. . . ." Thus we are led to believe that the cult of Stalin was a kind of anomalous evil apparition unrelated to the conditions of Soviet life and Communist dictatorship. And now that the evil man has been removed, no changes need to be made to prevent recurrence.

Thus supernatural causation parades as Marxism. To blame it all on some vague emanation called Stalinism is to avoid changes which would reduce one's own power.

There is no evidence in the Central Committee statement of any fresh thinking whatsoever. These are men who have not or will not learn the ABC's of free government, whether under capitalism or communism. They still talk vaguely of "the cult of personality" when they should be talking of the means to check it—of independent courts, a free press, a parliament or Soviet in which delegates speak up for the grievances of those who elected them, freedom to demonstrate in the streets, trade unions which can voice worker grievances. Theoretically, all these exist in the Soviet Union. Had they existed in practice, the evils of Stalinism would never have grown so enormous; criticism, exposure and protest would have kept them within bounds. All these issues were understood and argued out in the early days of the Revolution, when there were still opposition parties with their own papers. Some of the bitterest battles within the ranks of Bolshevism were fought over the issue of a free press, i.e. a press which would not be the monopoly of one party or one point of view. Originally, after the Revolution, Lenin projected the re-allocation of nationalized printing resources among various parties in proportion to their strength.

Echoes of An Old Hoax

Fanaticism, foreign intervention, civil war, and old habits—Russian habits—soon swept all this into the discard. But it is in these first years that study must begin, that lessons may be learned, from which a new Russia can find its way again. How much is the de-Stalinization campaign worth when his successors and traducers talk exactly as he did? The conclusions of the Central Committee sound extraordinarily like those statements of the 30's which accompanied the adoption of Stalin's Constitution, statements which read so painfully today in the pages of friendly observers like Beatrice and Sidney Webb because it was all so enormous a hoax.

The very words might be Stalin's. He too if he were alive and felt it necessary to defend himself would be saying that the Soviets "were and remain organs of genuine popular authority," though they ceased being organs of popular authority very soon after the Bolsheviks took power. Today they are the vermiform appendixes of the Russia Revolution, vestiges of spontaneous uprising in 1905 and 1917. Today the Supreme Soviet neither legislates nor debates; it only applauds. Stalin, too, boasted in the 30's exactly as this Central Committee does

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The Wasteland The Blacklist Has Created in Radio, TV and Movies . . .

John Cogley's two volume Fund for the Republic report on blacklisting in movies, radio and television is written with verve and humor; its findings are a rich store of "Americana," it could all be enjoyed as social comedy if it were not so full of broken lives and unsung heroes.

Observers not afraid to be aware of the political nuances in the contemporary American scene will note that the Fund for the Republic picked a Catholic to head up its study of blacklisting. The fact that a man is a Catholic is nowadays regarded as prima facie evidence that he can't be a you-know-what. But Cogley was executive editor of *The Commonweal*, which is already being described as left-of-center. It will be interesting to see whether, when Cogley appears before the House Un-American Activities Committee July 10, his inquisitors are primed to test his orthodoxy.

Cogley's study like earlier ones for the Fund for the Republic avoids conclusions. The Fund obviously is afraid to take a position and relies on the therapeutic effect of publicity. The nearest Cogley comes to a suggestion is at the end of his penultimate chapter where he says, "If the American businesses which together comprise the radio-TV industry are to assume the burdens of government, they must also assume responsibility for dispensing justice."

Cogley's findings make one shudder to think of a Madison Avenue or Hollywood jurisprudence. The outlines of this system of "dispensing justice" are already clear in his study. The keystone is "saleability." As the Screen Actors' guild said after Gale Sondergaard asked it to fight the blacklisting of those who used the Fifth amendment, "if any actor by his own actions outside of union activity has so offended American public opinion that he has made himself unsaleable at the Box Office, the Guild cannot and would not want to force any employer to hire him." The prime consideration in this crusade against Godless materialism is what can be "sold": our Christian soldiers march to the tinkle of the cash register.

"Muir, Who's Muir?"

Nothing in the report is more valuable than the light it throws on just what constitutes that "public opinion" the radio, TV and movie business fear to offend. A vice-president of Alcoa said it did not receive a single letter as a result of an attack on the Murrow program in *Spotlight*. General Foods telephoned branch sales offices during the Jean Muir furore to see how sales were being affected and got the answer, "Muir, Who's Muir?" Yet four letters were enough to start the late Philip Loeb's troubles on "The Goldbergs."

Cogley found that local radio and TV broadcasters in Syracuse ignored Laurence A. Johnson, its famous anti Red and pink crusading grocer. "Few of Johnson's fellow townsmen," Cogley reports, "can understand why he is taken so seriously on Madison Avenue." Cogley has his own shrewd answer. "The man from Syracuse," he writes, "saves the industry from looking like a punch-drunk boxer who takes a swipe at the air here and there, then staggers back from imagined blows. With Johnson in the ring, the industry spokesmen do not have to feel foolish when someone asks just how real the 'economic' threat is. That argument is based on pleasing 'the public'; for purposes of defending blacklisting, Johnson *is* the public."

The report is full of vivid phrases which illuminate the wasteland into which a whole generation has been driven. A man trying to get cleared: "It's like battling ghosts." Aesopian language to avoid the word "blacklist": "Is he clean?" Of the plight of some "listed" non-Communists (the Hollywood lawyer, Martin Gang, who specializes in "clearances" is talking): "They had no way to put themselves on record, like those who *had* been Communists. . . . The [Un-American] Committee would not hear them because they had nothing to tell so they could not clear themselves." Possible grounds for suspicion: "If one lives in the [Greenwich] Village, it's bad. Sometimes even if you let it be known you are a Democrat. If you are a member of the ADA, it's murder." Conscience: "He was a fine actor . . . it was a gross injustice. . . . People cared about him as a person too. . . . But what can you do?"

TV writer: "If the sponsor's wife doesn't like people to die in a play, people can't die." Another writer: "Nowadays it would certainly be a mistake to let the underdog win in the end. So I don't." Underground: "My wife had a copy of Karl Marx that she got when she was 16 or 17 years old. One night we were having a producer and his wife over for dinner and we didn't want him to see this book, so she removed it from the shelf." The only really safe performer: One "white" list included Edgar Bergen's dummy, Charlie McCarthy.

Cogley and the Fund have provided a most important study in contemporary history. The quick collapse of the high liberal position first taken by the movie industry, the rise of "clearing" as a new racket-profession, the oily characters who are its leading lights, the artists who went under rather than abandon their principles, the silence and moral indifference which covered up their fate—this is the land of the free and the home of the brave as it really is in the middle of the cowed Twentieth Century.

Galileo Still "Controversial"

A television director who let himself be interviewed "off the record" said, "You can find evidence of Communist-thinking in almost anything if you are determined to find it." One example he gave was an ad man's complaint, "Why do you always use stories about a little man against a big man—it's Communist-like thinking!" The other concerned the CBS history show "You Are There." It put on Galileo's recantation, but only after carefully checking with clergymen. "Nowhere was it either stated or implied that Galileo was tortured to exact his recantation," the director said. "Still CBS got a letter from a priest denouncing the 'Communist' implication that Galileo had been tortured."

Radio-TV "Top Level" Has Low Opinion of "Lists" and "Listers"

Press coverage of the Fund for the Republic report on blacklisting overlooked an appendix containing the results of a poll by Marie Jahoda of New York University. This showed that "top level" radio-TV executives took a more sour view of "listing" than the general run of those interviewed.

Everyone of the top level interviewed thought blacklisting did more harm than good and all of them thought professional jealousy played its part. To the question, "Are the listers sincere and patriotic?", top level replies were: "sincere but misguided, crazy," 37 percent; "some sincere, others not," 16 percent; "insincere, profiteers, pathological," 47 percent.

"Top level" also took a dim view of what might get a person into trouble. One-third thought past Communist or "fellow traveller" activities lay behind blacklisting, but two-thirds replied, "accidental or personal associations; current non-Communist, political activities; union activities, etc."

Ninety-five percent of the "top level" replies thought the blacklist situation was getting better rather than worse while 5 percent replied, "about the same."

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. . . And A Preview of What It Is Doing to Newspaper Business

It is not difficult to imagine the lofty ironies in which the editorial page of the *New York Times* would indulge if the Soviet press began to purge its employe rolls of men who were once Bukharinites or Trotzkyites.

But two new decisions—one by the Appellate division of the New York State Supreme Court, the other by an arbitrator—show that the *New York Times* still insists on firing staff members for past political association with no evidence of misconduct, political or otherwise, on the job. These decisions also deserve attention because they show how blacklist practices are creeping up on newspaper business, thanks to the thoughtlessness of newspapermen themselves.

This inability to think past popular prejudice is striking in the case of Melvin J. Barnet. The *New York Times* grievance committee of the Newspaper Guild and the membership of the *Times* unit voted against taking Barnet's case to arbitration after he pleaded the Fifth before the Senate Internal Security Committee.

Toward Company Unionism

The executive board of the New York Newspaper Guild voted to reject the actions of the unit and its grievance committee, and to take the Barnet case to the arbitration provided by the *Times* contract. A State Supreme Court judge held the Guild was bound as an agent by the decision of the unit. But a five man appellate court has just unanimously reversed, holding that this was an improper extension of "the common law rules of agency to the internal affairs of a union." Obviously something very much like company unionism could arise if a unit were allowed to reinterpret its contract to suit its mood and management's. The appeals court ordered arbitration of Barnet's case.

But how little this may be worth was indicated at the same time by Edward F. Corsi's decision as arbitrator in the case of another *Times* copyreader, Jack Shafer, who also pleaded the Fifth before the Senate Internal Security committee. Shafer told management when subpoenaed that he had been a member of the Communist party from 1940 to 1941 when he joined the Army, that he reactivated his membership in 1946 and resigned in 1949 before joining the staff of the *Times*.

The *Times* contract allows discharge only for "good and sufficient cause." Management claimed his job on the foreign copydesk was "sensitive." Shafer had been on this job for more than six years but management argued that its right to fire should not be affected "merely because the employe's past job performance has been unexceptional."

An Occult Standard

This involved a man's right after so many years on a job to be judged by his record. "The stated cause of 'lack of confidence'," the Guild argued, "related exclusively to anticipated guilt rather than actual misconduct and was wholly subjective and unreviewable and a total negation of the contract right not to be dismissed summarily."

Walter Against Blacklisting?

"It is immensely heartening to have the voice of Rep. Francis E. Walter added to the protests against the practice of blacklisting. In a press interview on Thursday, the chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities vigorously condemned the practice —both when it affects persons who have invoked the Fifth Amendment rather than testify regarding Communist affiliations and when it affects persons who have testified freely and implicated others. 'It creates all sorts of schisms in our society,' he said.

"It must be of concern to Mr. Walter, therefore, that the reports and files of his committee have been so important a source of blacklists. These reports and files are filled with the names of persons who have been the targets of unchecked and unverified accusations; and they have been made available with a carelessness and a callousness that contributed to misuse of them. We hope that Mr. Walter's awareness of the evils of blacklisting will lead to an abandonment of the practice."

—Washington Post editorial, July 1

There was a revealing moment in the hearing when management was asked whether Shafer would have been fired if he were employed on the sports copydesk, presumably "non-sensitive." The answer was, "No." But no move had been made to transfer Shafer to a "non-sensitive" post. To have done so would have left the *Times* still subject to criticism from the Internal Security Committee for keeping on its staff a man who had pleaded the Fifth.

Not Anti-Communist Enough?

Managing Editor Turner Catledge testified unctuously, "Not only must we be sure that the person who handles our [Communist] news is not pro-Communist. We must be equally sure that he will not lean backward to prove that he is not a Communist or no longer a Communist." Ruled Arbitrator Corsi after quoting this passage, "Mr. Shafer could give the *Times* no such assurance, his record on the job notwithstanding" so the dismissal was justified. In other words Shafer could not assure the *Times* he would not be too anti-Communist in handling Communist news!

To the credit of the *Times*, however, it has not yet fired several staff members who admitted past party membership but pleaded the First amendment rather than name others, thus risking a term in jail. The real difference between the handling of these cases and earlier firings is that management first buckled under and then stiffened in its attitude toward the witch hunt. Management itself has not claimed the difference was that between pleading the Fifth and pleading the First, since the *Times* editorially has consistently upheld the right to plead the Fifth.

When The Blacklisters Are Attacked, They Cry "Censorship"!

"'Arrogant attempt at censorship' is the label applied by AWARE Inc., anti-Communist organization in entertainment-communications, to the $500,000 libel suit filed last week by John Henry Faulk, CBS disc-jockey and 2d VP of the actors union AFTRA, against AWARE, Vincent W. Hartnett and Laurence A. Johnson. Faulk alleges he has been injured by AWARE publication 16 of last February 10, charging him with some half dozen past Communist front connections.

"Said AWARE President Godfrey P. Schmidt: 'AWARE declares flatly that Faulk's charges, direct and by innuendo —of racketeering, of extorting money nefariously for employment clearances, are desperate and irresponsible lies. Faulk's suit has no basis in reality and AWARE will not suffer from it.

"'The true meaning of this case lies elsewhere,' Mr. Schmidt continued. 'Faulk is one of those who will do anything to prevent free public discussion of the Communist issue and its more ticklish aspect, Communist fronts,' continued Mr. Schmidt. 'AWARE regards the problem of the Communist fronter—the non Communist who knowingly or unknowingly allies himself with Communist causes—as basic to the solution of the entire issue of the operations of the domestic Communist conspiracy.'"—*AWARE Press Release.*

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Will Poland's Rulers Have the Good Sense to Meet The Crisis With Clemency?

Socialism's Future in East Europe May Depend on Poznan

(*Continued from Page One*)

now that "Soviet democracy" is superior to "bourgeois democracy" because it not only "proclaims freedom of speech and of the press . . . but also insures them materially."

The reference is to Article 125 of Stalin's Constitution which says that the freedoms of speech, press, assembly and demonstrations "are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing shops, supplies of paper, public buildings, the streets, means of communication and the other material requisites for the exercise of these rights." There is no record that anybody was ever foolish enough to take this seriously and ask, please, could he print up some leaflets for a protest demonstration on Sverdlov square next Tuesday? This provision alone puts the Stalin Constitution among the masterworks of Russian humor. But is this the time to retell old jokes?

Out Come the Pet Bugaboos

The Central Committee statement, on the heels of the Poznan uprising, must shake confidence not only in the sincerity of the Krushchev leadership but in its competence. Its content and Moscow's reaction to Poznan will add to the disillusion engulfing the Communist parties abroad. The aroma of regimes doped by their own incense-burners is evident in the reactions from both Moscow and Belgrade; the Russians blamed worker discontent in Poznan on "imperialists," the Yugoslavs on "Stalinists." Both trotted out their pet bugaboos. Only in the reactions of the more intelligent Polish regime is there a recognition of real grievances. Where but in Moscow would a regime give out such implausible and stereotyped drivel as Tass's description from Poznan, "Workers expressed their deep disgust at the diversionist actions directed against the peoples' power?" What folly from Moscow's point of view, to give Washington credit for the uprising, to exaggerate Allen Dulles's importance, to picture the conventional minds and sedentary spirits of our State Department and CIA as global Robespierres? Even the densest Communist must begin to see that this is the familiar tactic of blaming every strike on sinister foreign influence.

The Poznan demonstrations, like strikes under other despotic regimes, quickly took on a political character. The whole affair had a quaint Nineteenth Century flavor. A young girl, militantly striding ahead, was photographed leading one band of workers; they carried a flag dipped in blood. There were barricades in the streets. This was like 1848, and even at a distance had that genuine Polish romantic air; one could almost hear someone playing Chopin from a balcony as the battles in the streets mounted in intensity. Soldiers fraternized with demonstrators; there were cries of "down with the Russians." The main grievance was underscored by the attack on the secret police headquarters. The workers of Poznan deserve the widest support from abroad; this uprising is the test of the Polish regime. How it reacts will determine its right to survive. If the emphasis is on suppression, all its bright hope will be destroyed. If the emphasis is on correcting grievances and if it has the magnanimity to treat the arrested demonstrators fairly, it will win confidence at home and abroad.

Chain Reaction Possible

Unfortunately the Poles must act within the limits of their subordinate relationship with the Russians, and Moscow seems incapable of such bigness of spirit. Poznan may set off a chain reaction elsewhere in Eastern Europe; both the Czechs and the Hungarians are restive under wooden-minded Communist regimes. The pendulum may swing back to rigid repression. Now is the time for Western Leftist opinion of all kinds to make its influence felt on the side of the Poznan workers if socialism is ultimately to survive in Eastern Europe. The Polish regime should be challenged from abroad to permit foreign observers in Poznan; there have been no direct newspaper reports from the city since the first day of the uprising. I would like to see—and would be glad to join—a group of persons friendly to Poland send a cable asking the regime to allow full legal guaranties for those arrested. The Polish regime and socialism itself will be on trial. Have Cyrankiewicz and his colleagues the greatness to see the real challenge of the Poznan uprising and to meet it—with clemency and reform?

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